

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 /087 W
-----107382 211541Z /47

P 211356Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1380
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NY

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E. O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PDEV PBOR IS
SUBJ: CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SETTLEMENTS IN GAZA STRIP CONTINUES

REFS: A. TEL AVIV 2110, B. TEL AVIV 725

1. ON FEB 17 TRIP TO RAFAH APPROACHES EMBOFF NOTED ONGOING NEW SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION IN GAZA STRIP. FIVE BULLDOZERS WERE LEVELING GROUND AT SITE OF QATIF B (1 KM SOUTHWEST OF NEZER HAZANI) AT 1230 PM. AT QATIF C (1.5 KM SOUTHWEST OF NEZER HAZANI) TWO CONSTRUCTION DERRICKS WERE ON LOCATION AND SIX HOUSES HAD ALREADY BEEN CONSTRUCTED. WORKERS HAD ALREADY LEFT FOR THE DAY AT THIS SITE.

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2. EMBOFF OBSERVED THREE SO-CALLED "AGRICULTURAL OBSERVATION POSTS" IN HARUVIT AREA. GROUND-LEVELING AND FENCING OF THESE SITES HAD TAKEN PLACE IN JAN. AT SITE A (1.5 KM WEST OF HARUVIT) TWO WATER TOWERS AND A PRE-FAB SHACK WERE LOCATED IN A FENCED 50 BY 50 METER AREA. GIVEN THE SAND ON THE APPROACH ROAD, NO ONE HAD BEEN TO THE SITE IN DAYS. AT SITE B (1 KM NORTHEAST OF HARUVIT) A SIMILAR FENCED AREA WITH

WATER TOWER AND PRE-FAB WERE NOTED. A WATER PIPE RAN TO THE SITE. AT SITE C (3 KM NORTHEAST OF HARUVIT) THERE WAS ANOTHER FENCED AREA WITH WATER TOWER AND PRE-FAB. A 5 KM LONG WATER PIPE (NOT FULLY CONNECTED) LINKED THIS SITE WITH THE MAIN WATER PIPE LOCATED BY THE MAIN COASTAL ROAD. IN ADDITION, THE SHORE NEAR SITE C HAD BEEN FULLY LEVELED, APPARENTLY WITH THE INTENTION OF PREPARING A SWIMMING BEACH. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THERE ARE ANOTHER THREE "AGRICULTURAL OBSERVATION POSTS" ALONG A NEW ROAD BEING CONSTRUCTED SOUTH OF HARUVIT.

3. ON SAME DAY EMBOFF DISCUSSED ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITIES IN GAZA STRIP WITH MAJOR AMIR CHESHIN, MILITARY GOVERNMENT LIAISON OFFICER FOR GAZA STRIP. CHESHIN STATED THAT THERE ARE NOW ONLY TWO NAHAL PARA-MILITARY SETTLEMENTS IN THE STRIP, MORAG AND NETZARIM. KFAR DAROM, ALTHOUGH CIVILIANIZED, WAS NOT TERMED A REAL SETTLEMENT. HE TERMED IT AS THE TEMPORARY HOME OF THE QATIF B AND QATIF C SETTLEMENT NUCLEI. ACCORDING TO CHESHIN, QATIF B & C SETTLEMENTS, TOGETHER WITH NEZER HAZANI, WILL MAKE UP THE QATIF BLOC.

4. COMMENT: THE LATE JAN DECISION OF MINDEF WEIZMAN TO FREEZE SETTLEMENT GROUND PREPARATION APPARENTLY RELATED ONLY TO MINAG SHARON'S "AGRICULTURAL OBSERVATION POSTS." CONSTRUCTION OF AUTHENTIC NEW SETTLEMENTS (SUCH AS QATIF B, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QATIF C, PRIEL, AND TALMEI YOSEF), ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE NOT BEEN AFFECTED BY THIS DECISION. FURTHERMORE, AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, WORK BY ISRAELIS ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON IS A RARITY. GOI THEREFORE APPEARS TO HAVE MADE COMPLETION OF THE TWO SETTLEMENTS WHICH WILL FILL OUT THE QATIF BLOC AS A HIGH PRIORITY OBJECTIVE. TO PUT THIS ACTIVITY IN CONTEXT, WE NOTE THAT LONG-TERM GOI OBJECTIVE IN SOUTHERN GAZA STRIP IS LINE OF SIX SETTLEMENTS FROM NEZER HAZANI SOUTHWEST ALONG THE COAST TO INTERNATIONAL BORDER. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTRUCTION, LAND SETTLEMENT, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV02356
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780078-0232
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780231/aaaabacf.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 18c8b7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEL AVIV 2110, 78 TEL AVIV 725
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3531758
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SETTLEMENTS IN GAZA STRIP CONTINUES
TAGS: PDEV, PBOR, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/18c8b7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014